



San Diego City Attorney **MICHAEL J. AGUIRRE**

NEWS RELEASE

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CITY OFFERS \$50 MILLION TO SETTLE DE LA FUENTE LAWSUITS

Council Briefed on Status of Negotiations in Closed Session

By Judge Lawrence Irving

San Diego, CA: Judge Lawrence Irving (Ret.) met with the San Diego City Council in closed session today to report on the status of settlement discussions regarding the City and three pending lawsuits involving border properties controlled by Roque De La Fuente.

"We have told Mr. De La Fuente that the City must use its limited funds to settle all of these cases at the same time" said Executive Assistant City Attorney Don McGrath. "It would be reckless for the Council to pay millions of dollars to Mr. De La Fuente and still face more of his lawsuits over the same property," McGrath added.

Trial counsel Christine Wilkes of Latham & Watkins confirmed that she and McGrath had repeatedly tried to settle the De La Fuente judgment of October 2001 and the other two cases now pending in the San Diego Superior Court.

An appellate ruling on the first case, known as the Border Business Park, is expected anytime from the California Court of Appeal in Riverside. The other two matters also brought by De La Fuente are still pending in San Diego Superior Court before Judge Linda Quinn.

"We have made very generous offers on behalf of the City to settle all three cases," Wilkes said.

"The City Council authorized the City Attorney's Office to make an offer of \$50 million over time to conclude all three of these matters. We hope Judge Irving, the leading mediator in the country, may still be able to end these cases for the City," said McGrath.

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